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THE
WITNESS OF TRUTH.

Vol. V.

OSHAWA, MAY, 1850.

No. 5.

CONSCIENCE.

[From the Christian Baptist.]

WHAT is called "the work of conversion," is in many instances, but the revival of early impressions. And what a poor progress the teachers of religion, as they are called, would make in converting persons, were it not for the early impressions made by parents and guardians, may be easily ascertained by comparing their success amongst Pagans and amongst the descendants of Christian parents. And even amongst the latter, their success is proportioned to the degrees of care bestowed upon some, in comparison of others.

Amongst the numerous accounts of "Christian experience" which we have heard from the lips of the converted, and the histories of their conversion, we do not remember to have heard one which was not to be traced to, or resolved into, parental influence, or its equivalent. This appears to be the *preaching* which is most commonly instrumental in bringing sinners into the fold of God. I have sometimes thought that not one preacher in these United States has had the honor of being the entire and exclusive means of converting one of the descendants of those who made any pretensions to christianity, except in the case of his own family. Their hearers and attendants, in public assemblies, have heard that there is a God, a heaven, and a hell, a Saviour, before they hear it from their lips. They predicate their pleas, arguments, exhortations, and addresses to their hearers, upon the hypothesis that they are in possession of these first principles. When any one is moved to *fear* or *hope* from their addresses, it is from comparing what he has heard, or from associating it with his former conduct and convictions.

This person was awakened on hearing a preacher read for his text these words, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation."—On hearing these words he was struck with fear; his whole soul was harrowed up; he was almost driven to despair; but in the conclusion he was made to hope in God and to trust in his salvation. Ask him what he feared and why he feared, and he will tell you that he feared the wrath of Heaven for having neglected this salvation. But had he

not previously believed that there was a future punishment awaiting the disobedient, how could his fears have been excited? "But," adds he, "I was not only afraid of the wrath of Heaven on account of my neglect, but I would rather than all the world that I could have believed in the Saviour and shared in his salvation." Well, why did you desire to believe in the Saviour if you had not previously believed there was a Saviour? Why did you wish to share in his salvation, if you had not before believed that you were a sinner, and that there was salvation? Your doubts and fears, then, were all founded upon your former convictions. And had it not been for these, neither the reading of these words, nor the preacher's remarks, would have produced one emotion. Nay, his strongest appeals to your conscience were based upon the supposition that you were in possession of these convictions. If we have been instrumental in any respect, it was in causing you to hope that notwithstanding you had long sinned against the light you had since an infant, there was room in the divine mercy for your pardon and acceptance. in believing and obeying the truths you had once received and acknowledged, and had been taught, whether your father was Protestant or Papist, High Churchman or Dissenter. He may have revived those impressions, and been instrumental in leading you to repentance for having lived in opposition to your own acknowledgement; but the seeds were sown before.

In the same manner the influences of Heaven take hold of these truths, however first communicated to the mind; and persons are not unfrequently, without a preacher, influenced to act according to the light formerly received, and *then* illustrated and revived—'tis true, not without a preacher, in the scripture sense, but in the popular sense. For parents, guardians, or whosoever pronounces the words of the preachers specially called and sent by God, only gives extension or sound to words long since announced.

But the seeds are sown in "a land of bibles," always in infancy or childhood, which, under the divine blessing, in riper years, bring forth fruit to everlasting life. Conscience is then formed, and without this, a man might as rationally expect to be instrumental in converting fish as men. But it most commonly happens that *tares* are sown with the *wheat* in the mind, though not in the sense of the parable; or in other words, improper views are communicated with the truth of God, which, in after life, give rise to that mental perturbation and those varied feelings of which many are conscious. The catechisms and little manuals, put into the hands of children, together with the old wives' fables

which they are wont to hear, lay the foundation for many a doubt and reverie, of which, otherwise, they never would have known any thing.

Every person who will reflect, and who can reflect upon the workings of his own mind, will readily perceive how much trouble he has experienced from mistakes. Nay, much of his present comfort is derived from the correction of former mistakes and misapprehensions. Who that has read John Bunyan's conversion, John Newton's, or Halyburton's, or any of those celebrated standards of *true conversion*, has not observed that glaring mistakes and erroneous views were amongst the chief causes of their long and gloomy trials; and that their after peace, and joy, and hope, arose from the correction of mistakes which the errors of education had thrown in their way.

For example: The numerous speculations on the different kinds of faith has pierced with many sorrows innumerable hearts. In all the varied exhibitions of christianity, much stress is laid on faith. And as soon as it is affirmed that he that believes shall be saved, and that care should be taken that faith be of "the right kind," the attention of the thoughtful is turned from the truth to be believed to "the nature of faith." The fears and agonies which are experienced are not unfrequently about "believing right." The great concern is about true faith. This person is looking in himself for what he has been taught are the true signs of regeneration, or of the faith of regeneration. He is distressed to know whether his faith is the fruit of regeneration, or whether it is mere "historic faith." Unable to find such evidences as he is in quest of, he is distracted, he despairs, he agonizes. He tells his case. He is comforted by being told that these are "the pangs of the new birth." He draws some comfort from this consideration, which increases or decreases as these pangs are supposed to be genuine or the reverse. Thus he is tossed to and fro in awful uncertainties, which are more or less acute according to his moral sensibilities. By and by he hopes he is regenerate, and a calm ensues, and he is joyous because he fancies he has been regenerated. Thus his comforts spring not from the gospel, but from his own opinion of himself.

Another, under the same system, receives no comfort because he has not found the infallible signs in himself of being a true believer. He despairs—he is tormented. He concludes that he is one of the reprobates. He is about to kill himself. What about? Not because there is no Saviour, no forgiveness, no mercy. Not because the gospel is not true; but because it is true, and because he cannot find in himself the true signs of genuine conversion. Thousands have been ruined

—have been shipwrecked here. This case never occurred under the apostle's teaching. It is the genuine offspring of the theological schools. It is the experience of a bad education. A few drops of acid sour a puncheon of the sweetest wine. And thus a few wrong notions convert the love of the Saviour into divine wrath—make the gospel of non-effect—embitter life—and make it better not to have been born.

I well remember what pains and conflicts I endured under a fearful apprehension that my convictions and my sorrows for sin were not deep enough. I even envied Newton of his long agony. I envied Bunyan of his despair. I could have wished, and did wish, that the Spirit of God would bring me down to the very verge of suffering the pains of the damned, that I might be raised to share the joys of the genuine converts. I feared that I had not sufficiently found the depravity of my heart, and had not yet proved that I was utterly without strength. Sometimes I thought that I felt as sensibly, as the ground under my feet, that I had gone just as far as human nature could go without supernatural aid, and that one step more would place me safe among the regenerated of the Lord; and yet Heaven refused its aid. This, too, I concealed from all the living. I found no comfort in all the declaration of the gospel, because I wanted one thing to enable me to appropriate them to myself. Lacking this, I could only envy the happy favorites of heaven who enjoyed it, and all my refuge was in faint hope that I one day might receive that aid which would place my feet upon the rock.

Here this system ends, and enthusiasm begins. The first Christians derived their joys from an assurance that the gospel was true. Metaphysical Christians derive their joys not from the truth of the gospel, but because they have been regenerated, or discover something in themselves that entitles them to thank God that they are not as the publican. The ancients cheered themselves and one another by conversing on the certainty of the good things reported by the apostles—the moderns, by telling one another what “the Lord had done for their souls in particular.” Their agonies were the opposition made by the world, the flesh, and the devil, to their obeying the truth. Our agonies are a deep and solemn concern for our own conversion. Their doubts were first, whether the gospel were true, and, after they were assured of this, whether they might persevere through all trials in obeying the truth. Ours, whether our conversion is genuine. More evidence of the truth removed their first doubts, and the promises of the gospel, with the examples around them, overcome the last. A better

opinion of ourselves removes ours. In a word, the philanthropy of God the fountain of all their joys—an assurance that we are safe is the source of ours.

The experience of the Moravians differs from the experience of almost every other sect. They teach their children that God is love, and through his Son loves all that obey him. This principle is instilled from the cradle. Their history does not furnish an instance of a work of conversion similar to those which fill the memoirs and magazines of all the different bodies of Calvinists. Perhaps enough has been said to prove our position, that “throughout christendom every man’s experience corresponds with the religious education. If not, a volume of evidence can be adduced.

THE “GUARDIAN” AGAIN.

The paper published in this city called the *Christian Guardian*—but which according to the Editor’s own system of nomenclature would be more correctly designated by the name of the *Methodist Guardian* still feels uneasy under the apprehension that some of the sheep of the Methodist fold may be led, by the perusal of the small tract by Mr. Bates, to question the correctness of that teaching which they have been wont to receive from their Methodist shepherds, and stray from the Methodist fold;—and the liberal-minded, Catholic spirited Editor, whose sole aim and end, is not to impose his “own notions as to circumstantial or forms of religion,” but to bring men to thoughtfulness, to repentance, to Christ—not to make them sectarians but to make them Christians—not to impose sectarian dogmas, but to inculcate the great truths of man’s fall, his redemption, and salvation through the faith of Christ and sanctification of the Holy Spirit;” still boils with indignation, because in an attempt to do this very thing there happens to be given at the same time a plain direction as to what is the Scripture mode of admission to the Church of Christ. If the *Guardian’s* sole object was of so Catholic a nature as he would wish his readers to believe, wherefore all this “zealous” opposition to the exertions of another body of Christians, the characteristic feature of whose practice is, that in receiving members into the Church, they insist upon having credible evidence that parties desiring admission have been brought “to thoughtfulness—to repentance—to Christ”:—that they understand “the great truths of man’s fall—his redemption and salvation through the faith of Christ, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit”;—

and that such parties before being admitted to the privileges of Church fellowship, are required to submit to that ordinance which Baptists conscientiously believe is an institution of Christ and ought to be administered to none others but such as have undergone that experience the *Guardian* describes.

Who has not seen children hold up their hands before their eyes and call to their companions "you don't see me"? Their conduct is quite as wise and consistent as is that of the *Guardian* in calling any other denomination sectarian and claiming to be free from imputation himself. Who does not know that while Methodists are "zealous" in propagating the truths of the Gospel their whole energies are directed to the accomplishment of this in connection with Methodism. Nobody blames them for this. They conceive that Methodism is the most perfect form of Christianity, else why do they practice it? Conceiving this, it is their duty to inculcate its dogmas; and the Editor of the *Guardian* would exhibit a better title to that catholic spirit which he claims to himself and Methodism, if he would manifest less of that jealousy of the exertions of others which his articles in reference to the distribution of Bates's Appeal have exhibited.

But let us examine the *Guardian's* claim to freedom from Sectarianism. Let us take the case of a man who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth under the influence of means used by the Methodists and who had never, even in the *Guardian's* estimation, been baptized, how would the Methodist minister proceed. Would he tell him that in being admitted to the Communion of the Methodist Church it was of no consequence whether he was baptized or not. Nay verily. The convert would most assuredly be told that he must submit to the rite;—and if he were unenlightened on the subject of Scripture Baptism the Methodist Minister would perform it either by sprinkling or pouring. But supposing—as is not very seldom the case with Methodist converts now-a-days,—he should have made up his mind that sprinkling and pouring were not baptism, but that only immersion was, would the Methodists who so attempt to cast ridicule and odium on the Baptists for practising immersion—would they refuse to receive him on that account. Nothing of the kind. Under the water he would go; and—influenced by the quintessence of that very sectarian feeling which the *Guardian* affects so much to deprecate, but which dictates the letter and spirit of his writing—rather than lose a member the Methodist priest would perform the ceremony.

It is much more easy to claim a title than to establish it. We have

another criterion by which to test the *Guardian's* boast. There are in Toronto several Methodist Ministers. Understanding soon after our arrival in the city that there was on the first Monday evening of each month a Union Missionary Prayer Meeting, we made up our mind to attend it, under the expectation that we should see a phalanx of ministers collected together for so catholic a purpose, and we felt certain that men so energetic in the Missionary cause as Methodists have the credit of being would be there, and be found the most active. We have been at three of these meetings and we have seen Presbyterians and Congregationalists; the Baptist Minister has been present each time; but we have not yet seen the face of a Methodist. Oh, no! "Methodism" would not be felt to be a direct gainer by such a meeting; and, therefore, "Methodism" was not represented. Is it not the same with other religious meetings having a general interest?

The *Guardian*, like many others, attempts to fasten on the Baptists the charge of intolerance because they insist on a compliance with Christ's command to be baptised before a party can be privileged to attend to His other command to commemorate his death in the institution of the Supper. We are not about to enter into a discussion with the *Guardian* on the question of close Communion: it is the charge of intolerance that we have to meet at present. We have always understood that a sect deserved to be branded as intolerant when they refused to allow others to follow the dictates of their own conscience on religious matters—that the Papists are intolerant when they persecute the Protestants—that the Church of England was intolerant when it persecuted the Puritans, and that the Puritans of New England were intolerant when they persecuted the Baptists—but we never supposed that a sect subjected itself to the charge of intolerance merely because while it recognised the right of all others to do as conscience dictated in attending to the ordinances of God,—it simply would not consent to countenance them in what was conscientiously believed to be error. While on this subject we may remind the *Guardian* of a fact, and it is one in which every Baptist may glory;—that of all the denominations which have ever so far controlled the affairs of any State as to have the opportunity to persecute,—the Baptist is the only denomination which never exercised it, but accorded to all others those rights which they claimed for themselves. What the Methodists might do in similar circumstances we know not. They are but of yesterday. But if we may judge from the spirit which pervades the "*Guardian*" and the antics which the Conference in England have been lately indulging in,

it is not likely they would long be able to make a similar boast. The priests have the too undivided control of their affairs to permit it. In fact it has been, and is, a matter of some surprise to us how the laymen of the Methodist Church have so long submitted to be priest-ridden as they are.

We have still another proof that the Methodists are at least as sectarian as their neighbors, and that the *Guardian* when it suits him can approve of that very course which our friends have pursued. In the column succeeding that in which his last tirade against the Baptists appear, the following expressions are used—"The idea has been thrown out before the public of a *Methodist* Missionary being sent to Rome." "The object of the mission would be the restoration of *Primitive* Christianity in Rome, as it is taught in the New Testament"—"the formation ultimately of an Italian conference of the *Methodist* Episcopal Church." Have the Baptists not as good a right to propagate their principles, and their views of what is Primitive Christianity anywhere they please as the Methodists or others have? Then, again, in the reports of Missionary meetings in the same paper, are to be found such expressions as the following: "The early days of *Methodism*."—" *Methodism* was never better than at the present time"—"But *Wesleyan Methodism* has many good friends in Goderich circuit yet"—"The remarks made by Messrs. Wood and Ryerson in defence of *Methodism* as it is"—"The enemies of our Zion (*Methodism* of course) have been raving round her walls"—"A few friends of *Methodism*"—"The eruption which took place here a few years ago was most destructive to *Wesleyan*"—" *Methodism* on the front of this circuit (*Bowmanville*) is rather low." If this is not a sufficient sample of sectarianism to be culled from one paper, then we do not know what sectarianism is.

In conclusion, we have this much to say for the comfort of the *Guardian*. The Baptists will take what course they please to bring men to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and to a right acquaintance with, and appreciation of the importance of the ordinances of Christ's church. The railing of the *Guardian* will rather stimulate them to greater exertions;—and so far as the *Pioneer* is concerned the misrepresentations in which the *Guardian* indulges of what may have appeared in the *Pioneer's* columns, will cause us little trouble. We know for what market the *Guardian's* remarks are intended, and therefore we are not surprised at their tenor; but before he writes again in reply, we would suggest the propriety of his sitting down and

meditating a few minutes on the import of the ninth commandment. It may be the means of saving him from the charge of endeavoring to make it appear that the *Pioneer* ever asserted or insinuated that a submission to immersion Baptism was the criterion of distinction between the church and the world. The whole spirit of the article which the *Guardian* mutilates is opposed to such an idea. Alas! there is among Baptists themselves too much of worldly conformity.

The *Guardian* has given quotations from two writers on the subject of his lucubration. Whether he has done this because he thought they struck harder and cut deeper than he could, we know not, and we care as little. But when he thought of quoting the words of a Baptist writer in support of his position, it is a pity he did not state at the same time that Mr. Noel in his late work, exhibited the same "liberality" of opinion. He might also have given a few specimens of that rancorous abuse to which Mr. Noel has been subjected since he became a Baptist—for becoming a Baptist—by those very denominations who could not sufficiently laud him, while they thought there was any chance of his joining their ranks. That would have been a sample of true sectarianism for the *Guardian*, if he wanted to find it out of his own body.—*Pioneer*.

We copy the above from our Baptist friend for the purpose of giving according to custom, both sides of a controversy. This is his second article, and we have given it entire. We have chosen it because it exhibits the writer's spirit and style to better advantage than some other of the replies he has offered. His first reply, however, although less dignified, less chaste, and consequently less spiritual, was superior in this one respect—it was preceded by the article on which it commented; an item of fairness seldom observed in these degenerate days, and which even our Baptist cotemporary, while arguing the easy subject of baptism, is not willing to observe invariably.

D. O.

POPERY AS AFFECTED BY EMIGRATIONS.

(From the *Puritan Recorder*.)

Those nations which were formerly reckoned as constituting the "Holy Roman Empire," those which constitute the ten horns of the Apocalyptic beast, have of late undergone convulsions, the issues of which, so far as they are to affect the Romish interests, are not yet wholly known. These convulsions indicate that Romanism has a disease of the heart, whose fatal termination is sure, but whose time none

can tell. Omitting here any notice of these national revolutions, it is interesting to inquire, What the system has to gain or lose in the changes of population which are taking place by the various migrations, expansions and colonizations which are now going forth from this and from the British nations ?

A few years ago the feeling was extensive, that the Protestantism of this nation was to be swamped by immigrations from Popish countries. The idea extensively obtained, that there was a definitely formed conspiracy on the part of European Romanists, to throw in upon us an amount of people and of funds for missionary uses, such as would soon secure the ascendancy of the Romish church and the extinction of our republican liberty, as well as of our liberty to use and teach the word of God. But time has now dissipated all such apprehensions.—What designs of that nature have been formerly entertained, have been turned to foolishness. For experience has shown, that the Romish immigration hitherto with great difficulty holds its own. Vast as have been the transfer of the material and strength of Romanism hitherto, the present body and force of the system here do not answer to them. Nor does the prospect for the future appear any more encouraging.—No mind can set a limit to the future immigrations of Romanists hitherto. And yet no wise man will predict that such an increase will effect any important change in the general order of civil and religious life of our country. A vast ocean can receive large streams of impure waters without a perceptible change of its own material. So that if the question,—What does Popery gain or lose by immigration?—were confined to this country, we should see that the loss was clear and great. Of the people transferred hitherto from the darkness and bondage felt in Europe, a large fraction of the present generation become, in various ways, alienated from the system, and of their children the proportion must be still greater.

But if we glance at Ireland, and raise the question, How is the strength of the system to be affected there?—the case must be still clearer. It would seem, that from that country the emigration had but just begun. The remedies which the Legislature have begun to apply to the national distress, by a change in the tenure of lands, seem to tend, as far as they reach, to an entire displacement of the degraded and poverty stricken occupants of the soil in favor of the more efficient Scotchmen. Interest impels the new owner of the land to defray the expense of transporting its pauper tenants to other climes, as the first improvement which he attempts. These people sent off are distributed

in the East and in the West—in America and in the Australian Islands. And if these could go forth as vigorous plants of the Romish stock, to strike root and have an independent increase in a new soil, it would be a vast advantage. But Popery itself has incapacitated them. Necessity now compels them to seek subsistence under the shadow of protestantism wherever they go. Whether in the United States, or Canada, or in Australia, the poor priest ridden Irishman must be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water for another class of people.—And his relation of dependance must limit the growth and influence of the system to which he is attached. So that what popery in Ireland loses by emigration is not compensated in churches of emigrants gathered abroad. The truth is, Ireland, one of the nations most hearty and self-sacrificing in its devotement to Rome, must, as a Romish nation, dwindle in proportion as improvements are introduced, and national sufferings mitigated.

Look at another result of national movements—that among the Spanish Americans. Begin with the result of our collision with Mexico. California and New Mexico, two arms of that republic, were brought under our jurisdiction, and in them Romanism at once resigned her sceptre. Nor did the war leave the influence of the Romish clergy in Mexico where it found it. It imparted to the Mexican nation such ideas of the superior force in this protestant nation—and it opened so many new channels of intercourse and acquaintance as will go far to cripple the power of the priesthood. And then the effects of the full and free intercourse of our people which the settlement of California will have occasioned with the Spanish and mongrel race along the whole coast of South America, will open more effective schools for the enlightening of Romanists. Through them the free Protestants of this nation in the transactions of commerce will be conveying instruction without intending it, opening the way for the action of those that do intend it. And broad and dense as is the cloud of darkness that rests over that continent, it is now fringed with light and hope. The opening of California and the cutting of a channel for the world's commerce across the Isthmus, are to put a new face upon South America and Mexico, and work a revolution touching the power of the priest.

The word *annexation* is becoming very familiar in our vocabulary. And we have had some experience of the effects of annexation on Romanism. The colony of Louisiana, when annexed, was entirely Romanish and but for annexation it would probably have remained so. But there the sceptre has departed from Romanism, as it more recently and

rapidly did in California and New Mexico. The next candidate for annexation is Canada. And in Lower Canada, Romanism is as an established religion; and it has the advantage of legal support after the model of France. The first effect of annexation would be a dissolution of this establishment. And the next would be a revolution of the order of society from that of France in the dark ages, to that of this country. There would of necessity be a new fusion and crystalization of the whole elements of that people. Similar remarks might, to some extent, apply to Cuba, in case of its annexation. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, and he may have wise ends to answer by an event to us so evidently disastrous. And as he overruled the Mexican war—got up as it was for slavery—and made its event to turn the balance of power in the Union against slavery, so he may suffer Cuba to be annexed with a similar purpose, on the part of slaveholders, and to similar results upon their interests. In that case, the Romanism of that Island, now so strong, will dwindle.

Had we time to follow out this line of thought, we should see that Providence is now doing a great work in the destruction of the Romish power, by the simple movements of people from place to place, and the popular enterprise which is the cause of those movements. The several branches of the human family are renewing their acquaintance and adopting each other's improvements. They are, so to speak, coming from home from the dispersions at Babel—not under the one central monarchy which they essayed there to build—but under one form of civilization—and that the form of christianity has developed. They are coming together to compare notes for mutual correction of errors, and for giving and receiving the common light and liberty which christianity has produced. And such a gathering of the ends of the earth, with its diffusion of Christian light, will bring the errors of popery under a scrutiny broad and searching.

SYRACUSE UNION CONVENTION

Victory, N. Y., 14th May.

It should be widely circulated and extensively known that a convention for the promotion of Christian union was held recently in the city of Syracuse. We were unadvised of this movement until a paper was put into our hands containing an account of the proceedings; and as we seldom meet with a narrative of things religious, in these days of party rivalry and factional vain-glory, that purports to be so well freighted with "good fruit," we resolve to notice the proceedings for

the benefit of others, who, with all the true-hearted, are most earnest in calling for the "same mind" and "same judgment" in the Kingdom of King Jesus.

The very fact that the desire for union has so far swelled over its past boundaries that a great meeting on a broad basis is called, designed to bring together ministers and Christian professors of every name and denomination to confer with one another upon the family bonds and uniting ties of the Christian scheme, is a fact of itself sufficiently attractive and meritorious to arrest the attention of all who have openly vowed allegiance to the one Lord. Christian union, in this age of division, is a subject that ranks with those of the deepest interest. Not a soul fairly enlightened in the gospel of God's Son, whether found in what is called an old or a new party, a large or a small party, a popular or an unpopular party, but must be touched with *sacred joy* and thrilled with religious impulse at the mention a cessation of hostilities among those who have taken upon them the Christian name, and a union, based upon truth, issuing in peace and love in place of party strife and sectarian hatred. The attempt, in itself considered, indicates that the words of Jesus are perused with greater earnestness and pondered with deeper diligence than in the evil times that have fallen upon us hitherto.

At this convention a number of distinguished gentlemen were present, among whom we may specify, Charles A. Wheaton, Gerrit Smith, Dr. Gregory, and a number of ministers, a few of whose names are King, May, Raymond, Mansfield, Prayn, Foran, Wing, Wilkison, Kingsbury, Ashley, and among the rest a lady, Mrs. Carson, who spoke on the occasion. Mr. C. A. Wheaton, of the congregational church in Syracuse, a gentleman of enlightened and liberal mind, was appointed President of the convened body, which remained in convention for some three days. As a sample of propositions, questions, and resolutions then and there submitted, we lay the following before our readers:—

Does not Christ's Church in Liverpool, in the county of Onondaga, comprise all the Christians and none other than all the Christians of Liverpool?

Are not sectarian churches, instead of being identical with Christianity, rivals of it?

These questions, with some others, were introduced by Gerrit Smith, upon which there arose a long and somewhat interesting discussion. The introduction of other questions and resolutions finally diverted the mind of the meeting from their further elucidation, without arriving at

any formal or definite conclusion. Mr. Wing, a gentleman from a distance, offered the following :—

Resolved, That the Church of Christ is a unit ; that it is one building whose beautiful walls are built of polished and lively stones ; the disciples of Jesus, Himself being the Chief of the corner ; that it is one Body ; the members of which are individual Christians, who are all by one spirit baptized into that Body.

Resolved, That we believe that Christ organized his own Church and that he furnished it with all needful rules and regulations for its government and perpetuity ; that (in the language of most of the creeds of the so-called evangelical denominations) the scriptures are the only and infallible rule of faith and practice, and consequently, to concoct any other is a work of supererogation and disorganization.

Even Mr. Gregory, one of the Doctors of Episcopacy, came forward with a resolution worthy of all acceptance Hear him :—

Resolved, That the only antidote to Sectarianism, is to return to those great principles of Christian Unity by which the Apostles and the primitive Christians were bound together in the one visible Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

If Episcopacy would, in future, always speak in this style, the very term itself, as a sectarian badge, would yield up the ghost and descend to the shades of death. This resolution is happily expressed, and it contains the marrow and fatness, the substance and living essence, of the groundwork of the spiritual unity of the Christian family. The unity sought for by all "good men and true," is found in those "great principles" of the gospel spoken, taught, and exemplified by the apostles, and upon no other basis can the oneness of Christ's people be secured ; for as the gospel brings them to Christ and saves them in Christ, the gospel also makes them one in Christ.

Mr. CLARK, of Monroe, submitted the following resolutions :

Resolved, That all churches founded or organized upon certain articles of belief or creeds are man-made churches—divide men into religious parties and sects—beget unholy rivalry and strife among men, and greatly hinder the spread of true christianity, and the brotherly union co-operations of Christians in the great work of purifying and saving the world.

Resolved, That we believe it to be the duty of all true Christians, in the language of the Bible, to "Come out from among" all man-made sectarian churches, and associate themselves together in the true Christian brotherhood which Christ has established to be the light and salvation of the world, taking the word of God as their rule of faith and practice.

The President, (Mr. WHEATON.) submitted the following :

Resolved, that all human creeds as bonds of Christian communion, or tests of church membership, are necessarily heretical and schismatical, and that as it is so, the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible should be the creed of Christianity.

These resolutions are in good keeping with the object of the meeting, and embrace various points of capital import. Let us listen to another resolution, brought forward by a Mr Keeler, of Madison:—

Resolved, That it is important and necessary to the comfort, convenience, and happiness of Christians of divers mental and physical constitutions and education, that there should continue to be as heretofore, corresponding sects or denominations.

Fortunately for the honor of the convention this was the only resolve 'of like faith and order.' We regret not it should stand alone. The convention terminated without coming to a formal vote upon any of the propositions or questions introduced, and without making arrangements for another meeting of like character; but it is understood that a second convention will be called at no distant day:

D. O.

RETURN OF THE POPE.

Cardinal Antonelli addressed the following notice to the diplomatic body on the subject of the Pope's return:

"FROM THE ROYAL PALACE OF PORTICI, March 12.

"The rebellion which so long oppressed the Pontifical subjects during the late events, having been quelled by the arms of the Catholic powers; the legitimate government has been by degrees revived in the Ecclesiastical States, to the satisfaction of all good men. Still, to fulfil the wishes of Catholicism and of the subjects devoted to their sovereign, the return of the Holy Pontiff to his see was still wanting. Various difficulties have hitherto contributed to retard it, and especially the anxious desire of his Holiness to relieve the wants of the State. This object being now attained, he has resolved to return to his temporal dominions in the beginning of the following month of April. The Holy Father trusts that the hand of the Lord, which led on the armed powers to the holy enterprise, will vouchsafe to bless the measures he constantly meditates for the good of his subjects. Nor does he doubt but that all the powers with whom the Holy See maintains amicable relations, and who contributed with their moral and material influence to restore the Sovereign Pontiff to the full and free exercise of his authority, will, animated by an equal and constant interest, be disposed to guarantee his liberty and independence, so indispensable to the universal government of the church, and to her peace, which is that of Europe. The undersigned Cardinal, Pro-Secretary of State, in communicating this to you, has the honor to renew the expression of his distinguished esteem.

(Signed)

"ANTONELLI."

Does it not seem as though Satan's Prime Minister dictated the preceding compliments to the beloved "Catholic powers" which are

said to have delivered the 'Ecclesiastical states' from oppression and rebellion to open and prepare the way for the return of the "Holy Pontiff" who is so well "disposed to guarantee liberty and independence." It is certainly worthy of a "Cardinal" of the "Holy Father," "the sovereign Pontiff." Grand result! "The arms of the Catholic powers" have used their bayonets, their swords, their cannon balls, their grape-shot to conquer and kill those who could not serve the Pope, and these "powers" with such Christian armour engaged in this "holy enterprise" having succeeded "to the satisfaction of all good men," the saints of the sovereign Pontiff, who are beloved and faithful for their works' sake, "his Holiness" makes the infallible resolve to return to his holy chair in the sacred city of Rome! Blessed and happy is he who hath part with the sovereign Pontiff! for on such the Romish curse shall never be pronounced!!

The news has lately arrived that the "Holy Father" has found his way back to his former palace in the 'eternal city.' The old gentleman has been an exile since December, 1848; and it is presumable he feels peculiarly grateful to the "armed powers" for his safe "return to his temporal dominions," and for the slaughter, imprisonment, and banishment of those naughty subjects who could not be persuaded he was more than a man—those wicked and rebellious children whose strange ideas led them to proclaim that Christ was the only Head of the church, and that Italy, in the matter of temporal government, should enjoy as much liberty as the ancient Spartans or the modern Swiss! Many a sigh mingled with tears and many a timid fear has the venerable catholic Papa experienced since he hurriedly threw off his two-story crown, and fled like a fugitive, disguised like a slave escaping from his master, into a foreign land. Naturally timid, fearful, and irresolute, the great Pontiff must have been in 'evil case' as the prophets were accustomed to say, and even now, notwithstanding the "armed powers," will doubtless feel the legs of his chair screech under him. It may however be far otherwise. He may have all confidence in the security of his place and power. The "lying wonders" of his church, and the complete apparent subjugation of all enemies at present, may convince him that his seat is not to be overthrown, and that his sovereign authority is never again to be successfully disputed. Thus the papal Church may still be regarded as invulnerable, infallible, and eternal.

But popery, in its essence, nature, and spirit, is at a discount. The "material influence" of which this "Cardinal" speaks, or in other

words, the legions of armed soldiers, fighting under the Roman banner, for the Pope, might have served the papacy three hundred years ago, and the spirit of the age could have pardoned and sanctioned it, nay have extolled it; but civilization and christianization have done too much for the world to permit public opinion now to approve of such specimens of religious infallibility. The crusades were popular in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; but these holy "wars" are not now at par; and the "holy mother church" will yet have to learn that there is all the difference between the thirteenth century and the nineteenth as in the figures 13 and 19. The civilized world has beheld with horror the legalized monstrosity of the Pope's agents before the walls and in the streets of Rome. Even the nation that gave birth to the soldiers who conquered the brave children of Italy that struck for liberty, would fain hide her shame and cover her iniquity in view of this ill-famed victory. Doubtless then the time hastens when the very same nations who gave their "power" and "glory" to papal Rome, will "strip her naked and burn her with fire;" and who knows but the late iniquitous triumph will increase the wrath and add new force to the rage of the nations that execute the vengeance of the Most High upon the great Harlot and Mother of Apostasy?

D. O.

Victory, 16th May, 1850,

ORGANIZATION.

On this topic, so exciting for the last twelve months among the brethren south and west, we have hitherto kept profoundly silent. The epistles of correspondents, the articles of editors, the burthen of papers and periodicals, in the ranks of reformation, since the close of 1848, have united to call the mind of the brotherhood to the practical bearings of this subject. In the meantime, this *Witness* has been silently hearing the testimony of others, intending to add a word in due time, if we should learn when this time was come. *When to speak, how to speak, what to speak*, are all worthy of study, and may therefore not unwisely be ranged with the "essentials." But whether all the scribes who have been zealous to instruct the people in the mysteries of the organization of the church of Christ, and the co-operation of congregations under the one Head of the one Church,—whether the scribes have written on these points, are, in every instance, entitled to the plaudit 'well done good and faithful,' is not what we are at present to discuss.

That the "one body" of the Lord called the church, embraces within it the elements of organization effective and divinely suitable to every emergency, few lovers of the best Book will be disposed to dispute or gainsay. That there are many species or orders of organization called by the Christian name, and heralded to the world as ministering to the Christian cause, but not recommended by primitive precept or example, is equally true and indisputable. And, too, it is less difficult condemning the counterfeit than describing with accuracy and certainty the genuine. To censure the wrong, how easy!—but to point out the right belongs to a class of duties not unfrequently among the hardest to be performed.

To speak therefore with modesty on a topic so extensive in its bearings, and so variously viewed, is always commendable and always in place; and especially those who are not to be numbered with seniors in age, wisdom, or experience. Fortunately we are not inclined to inflict a multitude of words upon our friends in reference to this topic.

Be it observed, then, with all brevity, that, so far as we have learned the primitive converts were made benevolent by the gospel, and not by organizations. So great was the benevolence of those who were the first fruits of the gospel, that the "multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things he possessed was his own: but they had all things common. This was more than ordinary. Still it was the overflowing effects of the gospel. Organization, under the apostles, subsequently directed this benevolence, but did not create it. Are not the greater number of the organizations of the present day constituted upon the principle of making professors benevolent, rather than concentrating and guiding the benevolence they have, or that the gospel or truth has imparted?

Further, are we not authorized to say that, as "the manifold wisdom of God" is to be "known by the church," which church "is the fullness of him who fills all in all," any organization out of the church, or which has features, elements, and offices not included in the church, is an organization not scripturally orthodox? Now, apart from the investigation of all other co-operative organizations, there was in Paul's day, a great scheme of organization for the special benefit of the Jewish poor. The churches of Galatia, the churches of Macedonia, and the churches of Achaia are specially instructed by the apostle how to organize and proceed in view of this duty. It was to be done in the church, by the church and in honor of the church. No extra officers

nor extra organization did Paul appoint to minister to the poor. In like manner as we understand, all other gospel obligations, from the least to the greatest, were to be discharged, not out of, or separate from but in and by the church, as originally constituted, and as constituted now, by the authority of prophets and apostles.

As we are bound to say only a few words, we conclude by expressing our belief that the primitive churches, which, in their aggregate, constituted THE ONE CHURCH, UNDER THE ONE HEAD, AND ANIMATED BY THE ONE SPIRIT, did co-operate and work together in the common cause of our Lord and Saviour, and that they were enabled thus to unite their means and labours through the organization fairly embraced in the framework of the church itself.

D. OLIPHANT.

Sterling, N. Y., 16th May.

OFFICE AND DUTIES OF EVANGELISTS.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Your favor of the 23d ult. came to hand in due course. The "spiritual business" on which it treats is very important, and but little understood. The "office and duties" of an Evangelist, have not received that attention from the brethren generally which their importance demand. Your queries are adapted to bring this subject under special notice, and the present is perhaps a favorable time to examine it. Two Evangelists have been employed, and it is necessary that the brethren should be well informed in reference to the sphere said Evangelists should fill and the duties they should perform.

Before responding directly to your queries, one or two preliminary remarks may not be altogether useless. If we admit that Evangelists are divinely appointed, we must also admit, that they require to be divinely instructed, as instructions to persons appointed must always, to be authoritative, proceed from the power which appoints. If Evangelists are of human appointment, human instructions are sufficient, if of divine appointment *divine instructions are absolutely necessary*. Timothy was not only required to do "the work of an Evangelist," but was informed what that work was and how it ought to be done. We are then brought to this alternative—either we must admit that "the work of an Evangelist" is the same now as when Paul wrote and that consequently his instructions to Timothy and Titus are still applicable to Evangelists; or we must affirm that "the work" is different and that

different instructions are required, and if so where are such instructions to be found ?

Assuming without hesitation that *the work* is the same now that it ever was, we regard the epistles to Timothy and Titus as containing infallible rules for Evangelists of the present time, and will without further preface now apply those rules in answering your queries.

“ Rebuke not an Elder but entreat him as a Father.” Query 1st. “ Does the apostle here lay down a general rule, requiring an Evangelist, with whatever church he may be laboring, to labor with, entreat, and affectionately admonish Elders?” Answer. Yes, this is a general rule to be observed when occasion requires. “ Against an Elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses.” Query 2nd. “ Should the Evangelist as such hear and adjudge cases of accusation against Elders?” Answer. Yes. But as a prudent man he will naturally avail himself of all the assistance which the wisest and best in the church can afford. “ These things *command* and teach.” Query 3rd. “ Is this authority in any case now to be exercised, and if so is the Evangelist to exercise this authority in every church alike—at least every church that receive him as an Evangelist?” Answer. This authority should be exercised now as well as formerly, but not in every church, alike for every church will not stand equally in need of it. In every church an Evangelist has the same authority, but he will use it as circumstances require. In a church which does not receive him, he will of course neither command nor teach. In all cases, he can only *command* and *teach the things* referred to by the apostle. “ Lay hands suddenly on no man.” Query 4th. “ When a new Elder is to be ordained in a church having Elders or an Elder, should the Evangelist assist or should he stand aloof, if not specially invited to take part in, or to attend wholly to the ordaining?” Answer. He should lay on hands either with others or alone, but not without the consent and invitation of the church—the church should always give such consent and invitation, and thus honor the Evangelist’s office. “ The things which thou hast heard of me—the same commit to faithful men—able to teach others.” Query 5th. “ Does this refer to the duty of an Evangelist to look discriminatingly for persons who will make good teachers or Evangelists, and to commit to them his own trust or work, as Paul made an Evangelist of Timothy by taking him with him and teaching him?” Answer. An Evangelist should look discriminatingly for persons who will make good teachers or Evangelists and should adopt all proper means to develop and improve their talents, and when their

talents are sufficiently developed and their characters established he should use all his influence in assisting to place them in the offices for which they are qualified. Query 6th. "As an Evangelist is a general officer for all the churches, is he a member of every church, so far as authority is concerned and yet not a member of any particular church by having a formal reception?" Answer. An Evangelist is a member of "the body of Christ," and as such, belongs to the congregation he may for the time being be with, so far as regards all the privileges to be there enjoyed, and so far as regards the mutual care and interest which church membership implies; but he should not remain in one place longer than is expedient in the proper execution of his office. Query 7th. "If two, three, five, or ten churches co-operate in his ordination has he the same authority among all other churches that receive him?" Answer. Yes. Query 8th. "Can he therefore as occasion may require, act as Deacon, Elder, or proclaimer in all churches acknowledging him as Evangelist?" Answer. Yes. (In reference to the two last answers it should be observed, that a properly qualified Evangelist will in no case act with arrogance or presumption. As he is to be an "example in good behavior," he will "treat all men with respect;" and with becoming humility will rather—except on particular occasions—sit on the lowest seat than occupy, without special invitation, his own proper position) Query 9th. "Is it necessary for an acting Evangelist to settle down with a church and become a member of it to receive authority from it that he cannot otherwise receive?" Answer. No. An Evangelist properly qualified and appointed, is *authorized by the Head of the Church*, to do the work of his office *in all churches* and places, where his assistance is required. Query 10th. "What powers are invested in the Evangelist as regards his duty in the churches that refer alike to all churches?" Answer. To "ordain Elders"—to "command and teach." "Speak, exhort, and rebuke with all authority,"—in general, to "set in order the things that are wanting" in the organization and teaching of the churches, so that they will be perfect and complete, fully answering all the purposes of their organization. Thus we answer your questions.

It will be observed they refer to an Evangelist's duties *in the churches*. Such duties are discharged occasionally—as circumstances require. His constant standing employment consists in "preaching the word instant in season and out of season"—beseeching men to be "reconciled to God"—gathering poor wandering sinners into the fold of "the Shepherd and Bishop of souls."

Upon the whole it is evident that rare qualifications are required to discharge in a proper manner the duties of the Evangelist's office. An individual in order to do so, must be "a man of God," must "meditate upon these things"—give himself wholly to them, "and habitually pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness," that he may be "an example to the believers in word, in conversation in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

When such views as the above are expressed, it is desirable that they be carefully and candidly examined and compared with the scriptures of truth. This cannot always be done when the writers are known—they generally have too much influence or too little.

Hoping these matters will receive from the brethren that attention which they deserve,

We are, dear brother,

With Christian esteem,

April, 1850.

B. S. O.

SPECIAL NEWS.

EVANGELIST'S TOUR—REPORT NO. IV.

Toronto, May 18th, 1850.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—At the close of our last communication, (dated from Erin April 16th) it was stated that we had been labouring there for two weeks, and that 22 had obeyed the Truth.

The attendance at the meetings continued to increase, the anxiety of the people to hear the Gospel proclaimed was truly encouraging. The good brethren in Erin, who have always enjoyed the comforts of the Truth, and giving evidence of being under its quickening power and soul-renovating influence, exhorted us to continue our efforts; and as the fields around here were so evidently white unto harvest, to prolong our stay in order to reap the fruits, we did so, until obliged to return home for a week and a half through sickness. We resumed our labours in the same place on the 4th inst, and stayed until the 9th. While in this Township we immersed in all 52 persons, that made the good confession, besides eight or ten that were restored to their former standing in the Church. The angels that are in Heaven are said to rejoice over one sinner that repenteth; surely the brethren who hear the cheering news will be filled with gladness, and will thank the Father of Mercies for crowning the Gospel with success, in turning so many from darkness to light and filling them with a joy in believing. Let the prayers of the brethren ascend to a throne of Grace in their

behalf, that they may be enabled to stand fast and hold the begun confidence, and rejoicing of the hope; steadfast unto the end. It was cheering unto us to meet our esteemed Brother Black, who has bestowed much labour upon this church and neighbourhood, while here, affording an opportunity for those that sow and those that reap rejoicing together. We took our leave with our kind and beloved brethren in Erin, both with joy and sadness; realizing the truth of that saying while here, "We oft must take the parting hand."

We arrived at our excellent Brother Menzies' in Esquesing, on the 9th; here we had both a home and a FATHER. His health is good although not admitting of his leaving home for many hours at a time. He continues the esteemed Brother and efficient pastor of the Church here. May his brow long continue in strength and his mental eye undimmed with age. This church, although once one of the largest in the province, is now small, in consequence of the brethren moving to other localities. After addressing four meetings, which were but thinly attended, we took our leave, accompanied by some of the brethren and sisters to our next halting place, which was at brother Jacob Snure's. Appointments for two meetings were before us. They were well attended; the people seemed very attentive and anxious to hear the Truth. The prospects were such as to justify a larger portion of time, being employed in labouring here, which we hope to have in the fall of the year.

Travelling towards Toronto, we stopped at brother G. Ross' in the Township of Toronto. There are a few brethren settled around here; they meet as a church on the first day of the week, to break bread, &c. We held two meetings. Arriving in Toronto and most affectionately received by the brethren, we set about making arrangements necessary for holding meetings. It is our intention to be in the Township of King, on Tuesday, the 21st inst. Pickering the week following; Oshawa, Monday, the 3rd of June. Would the brethren be so kind as to make arrangements for meetings on that and the two following evenings.

Yours in the good cause,

A. ANDERSON,
JAS. KILGOUR.

* Report No. 3, has not been received at this office. A mistake must have occurred somewhere.

THE BIBLE IN SWITZERLAND.

THE GIBBON HOTEL, A BIBLE DEPOT.

Lieut. Graydon, who has acted as Agent in Switzerland says:— I would mention here, that three days after remitting to you my last account the proprietor of the HOTEL GIBBON in this town, who has charge of my depot, paid me 1,015 francs, as the proceeds of sales of about 544 copies sold up to the 31st July last. * * * * I believe that the Gibbon Hotel is already quite a brilliant and truly rejoicing exception, as it respects the dissemination of Holy Writ, in the multitudinous list of hotels throughout Europe, if not the world. And is it not an extraordinary exception, when we consider that the hotel bears the name, and is built upon the very ground so often paced by him who so thoroughly hated the gospel, and did so much injury to its blessed cause? Surely this exception, however unimportant in appearance, is of the Lord! Some 4,000 copies of his Word have now been sold in that very hotel. The other day the landlady, on meeting me in the street, told me, ‘I have sold several more Bibles and New Testaments since you took the account.’

Of the same party he again says:—

“ Since I wrote my last letter, the proprietor of the hotel has told me, ‘I have some hundred more francs for you; only last evening I sold from thirty to forty copies. Many are the demands for large Bibles.’ This week she will be supplied with these last, for which I had made a timely demand on Mr. Tiddy.

“ The very morning, at an early hour, after my return to Lausanne, the worthy proprietor of the hotel Gibbon called on me in her carriage, requesting more Bibles, the demand becoming more and more pressing. Her stock was not exhausted, but nearly so. I sent her a supply of 200 copies;—two days ago she told me, ‘They are not enough.’

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JUNE FOURTEENTH AND TWENTY-FIRST.

Let us say again, by way of remembrance, that on the second Friday in June, which will happen on the 14th of the month (misprinted in our last) the annual meeting is appointed to commence in the village of Bowmanville. As there is accommodation in the vicinity for all the disciples, and their friends, in the province, together with all who can attend from the South side of Ontario, a hearty invitation is hereby given to the lovers, followers, and friends of christianity to be then and there present.

The brethren in Jordan, we learn, are also desirous of a meeting for general attendance, which is appointed for Friday the 21st of June, one week after the Bowmanville meeting. It will be held at Jordan at the Meeting House of the brethren. Brother Jones is expected, and other labourers in the gospel vineyard. How many disciples and how many who are searching the way of life can attend? Is not now an acceptable time—now a day of salvation.

Zeal added to knowledge makes an excellent spiritual mixture.

D. O.